

OSD REVIEW
COMPLETED

Approved For Release 2005/04/22 : CIA-RDP85B00803R000100170070-9

NRO review(s) completed.

NRO - ORGANIZATION - CIA Recon Role
Memo for the Record

S/ [REDACTED]

4 June 1963

25X1

by John A. McCone, DCI

Subj: Discussions with Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric concerning his
draft memo of May 31, 1963, on operational aspects of NRO [REDACTED]

25X1

After discussing the memorandum briefly, I stated that while it appeared that the intent was not to disturb the CIA operation of overflights over denied territory, nevertheless lower echelon officers could interpret the memorandum differently and could create an issue on practically every overflight under consideration. Gilpatric admitted that there was a strong feeling expressed by General LeMay and apparently supported passively by General Taylor and Secretary McNamara that the time had come to move all reconnaissance operations from CIA to the Department of Defense. Gilpatric said this was not the intent of the memorandum, nevertheless, the sentiment existed in DOD.

I said that if this was the issue, then I'd like the matter settled on the basis of the issue, and after reaching a decision we could draft an appropriate memorandum to cover the agreement. I said, however, that I would oppose such a change for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the importance of keeping ICA's "imaginative qualities in the recon picture, ICA's unique ability to keep things secret was essential and would be lost if the CIA were to take over the recon picture. Force, and finally, the cost and time required to develop new equipmt such as the OX wld be enormously increased. Gilpatric urged that I not make the issue at this time,

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stating he felt confident that neither McNamara or General Taylor would be inclined to raise the basic issue because he knew that such a shift would be opposed by the President's Board, and probably by the President himself. Furthermore, it would be interpreted as another civilian-military problem, and they had too many of them on their hands at the present time. He therefore urged that I amend the agreement to such an extent as necessary in order to insure that no interpretation could be placed on the agreement which would have the effect of transferring responsibility for planning and carrying out covert flights over denied territory as a CIA responsibility. (sic)

I agreed to do this and to return the agreement to him with suggested amendments and changes. It was not necessary for me to use the memorandum on the responsibility for overflights of denied areas as prepared by Dr. Scoville, nor the basic authority for CIA IN THE conduct of overflights prepared by Houston. However, these should be kept available for future discussions.

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